

## PREACHING THE GOSPEL

One certain characteristic of the first century church was its evangelical nature. Today men deplore efforts to convert others. We hear charges of proselytizing, infringement on personal rights and “bad taste” if we solicit the interest of others. Requests are made that we go to the “unchurched.” May we remind our readers that these are examples of conversion in Acts? Most of all of the recorded cases had a religion. The three thousand converted on Pentecost were “devout” Jews (cf. Acts 2:5). The eunuch may have been either a Jew or Jewish proselyte. Cornelius was a Godfearing, devout Gentile. Saul was a zealous Jew and “a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee” (cf Acts 23:6). Lydia was a practicing Jewess (cf. Acts 16:13-15). God had a message for these religious folk and likewise He has a message to religious people today who have not obeyed the commands of Christ. To adopt the policy of never asking another person to become a Christian is completely out of harmony with New Testament Christianity. The church was mission minded. As we restore apostolic Christianity may we not fail to restore mission work. Every congregation must see to it that it has a part in missionary work. A congregation cannot afford to spend all its income so selfishly on itself. We fall short of the Lord’s will if we are indifferent to the spread of the Gospel.

The church in Antioch of Syria is a worthy example of evangelism. It sent forth Paul and Barnabas to the harvest fields. Luke says they sent them away (cf. Acts 13:2). After months of toil and hardship they returned to Antioch with a delightful report of what “God had done with them. “And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentile” (Acts 14:26-27). Some must go and some must *send*. Paul and Barnabas *went* and the Antioch church *sent* and both received a reward for assuming the responsibility. Let it be observed also that the church was capable of sending and receiving missionaries without the aid of a missionary society. The church is its own missionary society. It is superfluous to utilize a human missionary society. Loose thinkers do not believe that the world can be evangelized without a centralized society, but it was done in the first century. God’s plan for each congregation to be independent is workable even though this may not coincide with human wisdom.

Luke writes that “daily” the apostles preached Christ (cf. Acts 5:42). People were “added to the church daily” (cf. Acts 2:47). Discipleship calls for daily cross bearing (cf Luke 9:23). The brethren enjoyed daily fellowship (cf. Acts 2:46). The devil, our adversary, never takes a vacation. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet. 5:8). We, therefore, should feel compelled to say something for the Lord each day.

Harrell Davidson  
Obion, TN

## BELVEDERE BEACON

“Ye are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14)

Volume 10                      Number 5                      February 1, 2009  
A PUBLICATION OF THE BELVEDERE CHURCH OF CHRIST

535 Clearwater Road, Belvedere, SC 29841-2574

(Greater Augusta, GA area)

### UNCIVIL BEHAVIOR

I just came from my local bank and drove to Kroger’s gas station to fill-up my car’s tank. It was a beautiful day, Tuesday, 2 December 2008. I like to take care of my chores early; it was 10:00 AM. The gas station was not crowded. I opened my car door and heard a very angry, screaming voice near the gas pump next to me. A large middle-aged woman was outside her car on a cell phone. She was loudly blaring in rage to the one on the other end of the cell phone. I turned my back to her and started to process the gas pump. The outrageous screaming went on and on. I would not give her any attention to such shameful behavior. I know how easy it is for such a person to turn their anger onto innocent by-standers. In a flash her car drove away. Possible trouble was avoided and peace prevailed at the gas station.

As a Christian gentleman I pondered this experience. I could not think of anyone of my friends, family or strangers that I would ever address in such an uncivilized manner. Such type of conduct as described above is too common. With that said, you don’t expect it in such a place as a public gas station, in a very nice part of town. You expect such behavior outside or inside a bar or around unruly intoxicated individuals. The woman causing this uncivilized, boisterous behavior could not be a Christian. Such violent types of people are widespread. I find this very sad!

**THIS WOMAN AND ALL OF US ARE AND WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE WORDS WE USE:**

*“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned”* (Matthew 12:36-37).

**THIS WOMAN AND ALL OF US WILL GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF OUR ACTIONS:**

*“For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God”* (Romans 14:11-12).

*“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil”* (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

Donald R. Fox, Saltillo, MS

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

#### SUNDAY:

Bible Classes for all ages 10.00 am.  
Morning Worship 11.00 am.  
Evening Worship 6.00 p.m.

#### WEDNESDAY:

Bible Classes for all ages 7.00 p.m.

EVANGELIST: Ken Chumbley - Tel. No. (803) -279-8663

www.belvederechurchofchrist.org E-mail church@belvederechurchofchrist.org

**The Battle is of the Lord**

Being discouraged seems to be the normal reaction of weak and sinful man, while living among and trying to teach his fellowman the truth of God's word. So many times, we have seen men become distraught, down and out and ready to quit the battle when things were going rough for them. And, just so many times, the Lord has shown His power to the people and it would give courage and renewed strength to the ones in the battle. Several good examples of this come to mind from the Old Testament as well as the New. The battles we as Christians are involved with are not carnal as those with the Israelites. But, the examples are still the same. God wants His people to obey His instructions in fighting the battle for truth. We have to lend our support to the Lord and be "present and accounted for," as the military services ask.

The prophet Elijah is a typical example, as recorded in 1 Kings 19. He was already down and out, hiding in a cave when the Lord asked him "what he was doing there." He had been fighting in battles and things looked bleak to him. The very people of God's choice, the Israelites, had broken covenant with the Lord and had slain the Lord's prophets with the sword and were trying to kill him. He told the Lord, "*I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.*" The Lord told him that there were seven thousand yet who had not bowed the knee to Baal, and to get up and continue the battle and see the results. Great victories were won when Elijah obeyed the Lord and demonstrated his trust in Him. And that faith and trust is very important to the Lord. He demonstrated His power to fight the battle through a few of his people in the story of Gideon in Judges 7. Instead of thousands which showed up for battle, only three hundred faithful and dedicated men were chosen, and the battle was won, because it was "*of the Lord.*" Jonathan made a very important statement in this regard: "*It may be that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few*" (1 Samuel 14:6).

The young "shepherd boy" David, just before he killed the giant Goliath of the Philistines for defying the people of God, wanted all the world to know "*that there is a God in Israel*" and "*that the Lord saveth not with the sword and spear, because the battle is of the Lord*" (1 Samuel 17:46-47). This is the very thing which Christian people today need to learn. When we are on the Lord's side, having made that all-important decision of whom we will serve, we need to demonstrate that faith in Him to keep His word and let Him use us as His instruments. After all, He told Moses long before this "*who made your mouth?*" The battle for truth is done by individuals in the hand of the Lord, not only speaking for God, but, being the examples in the world, as "leaven in bread dough." It must be "active" to be of any value. Lukewarm Christians are still sickening to the Lord and He will vomit them out. If one is "too timid" or "afraid" to let the Lord use him, victories for the truth of God will be hindered, but not defeated. At one time, Jehoshaphat, king of Judah made this statement: "*O LORD God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?*" (2 Chronicles 20:6). Hosea makes it clear that the Lord has respect for His people who are faithful and will save them; but it will not be by bow, by sword or by fast horses and riders (Hosea 1).

As Elijah learned long ago, we too, need to have that deep faith in our Lord and keep the charge which we were given by our Lord Jesus: "*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine*"; "*Preach the gospel to every creature.*" "*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*" "*Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.*" Count it a blessing to suffer as a Christian. When the Lord is fighting the battle, we can't lose in the end.

Alton W. Fonville  
Saint Paul, AR

*Ken Chumbley*

## NEWS AND NOTES

Keep in your prayers the following: Helen Culpepper, Pam Gossett, Lavonne McClish, Linda Chumbley, and Rachel Fitzpatrick's aunt (Eula Baker) who has cancer, Maomi Aaron's sister who is having health problems, Myrtle Grimsley, Lanny Niver together with his daughter, Justine Hall's husband, Joe and Tim Smith.

Lanny Niver was not out last week as he was still having health problems.

Pam Gossett was not out last week as she was not well.

Jesus taught, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:19-21).

We have certainly seen "treasures" on earth disappearing. Your retirement portfolio has to some extent or another has disappeared. The value of your house, in many places, has gone down. Yes, "treasures" on earth can, and do, disappear.

Jesus emphasized that our "treasures" should be in heaven, not on earth. The reason for our treasures being in heaven is because they do not disappear; they do not diminish in any way, shape or form. Peter echoed the nature of these treasures when he wrote, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:3-4).

Beloved, we are living in such a time that we are truly experiencing the truth of the teaching of Jesus in this regard. Therefore, let us learn and let us practice the truth of Jesus, by laying up treasures in heaven, rather than on earth.

Beloved, Jesus said, "My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it" (Luke 8:21). May all of us "hear" and "do" God's word.

*Jim's Weekly Gems, 01/28/2009*  
*Jimmie Z. Gribble*  
*Portsmouth, VA*